Posture

The First Guitar Lesson That I Teach EVERY New Student

No matter the style of playing, EVERY student must understand a few basic principle techniques that they will use for the rest of their guitar playing. THIS is the guitar lesson that covers them! I'm going to break this down into some basic bite-sized pieces:

Posture - Make sure that your guitar is supported by your guitar strap. Don't have it so low that you can't play your chords correctly. No amount of "cool look" replaces bad playing. If you are not using a guitar strap, make sure that your guitar is supported by your legs, arm/body etc. so that you are NOT holding the guitar in place with your fretting hand. That type of grip will only ensure that you won't be able to play chords/scales well.

Hold the guitar pick comfortably, but firmly between the index finger and thumb.

Hint: If you are doing a lot of heavy acoustic-type strumming, check out some thinner picks, instead of medium and heavy gauge. They will tend to pull out of your hand when strumming the guitar, if they are too thick. Also, if you do go with a thin pick, get "nylon" type guitar picks as they tend not to split like standard picks do. Save the medium and heavy gauge picks for more intricate electric or acoustic playing. I use all different gauges depending on what I'm playing. My rule is: the more intricate the picking the heavier the gauge and vice-versa.

FINGERTIPS!!! This is **THE #1 rule for ALL beginner guitar players**. For the fretting-hand, play on your fingertips! Playing on the "pads" of your fingers, is bad practice and will make for sloppy playing and all sorts of frustration later down the road.

A good rule of thumb to remember is: ALWAYS keep your top knuckle of the fretting-hand curved. The more, the better as a hard, fast rule. The only exception to this is if you are doing bar chords or double-stops.